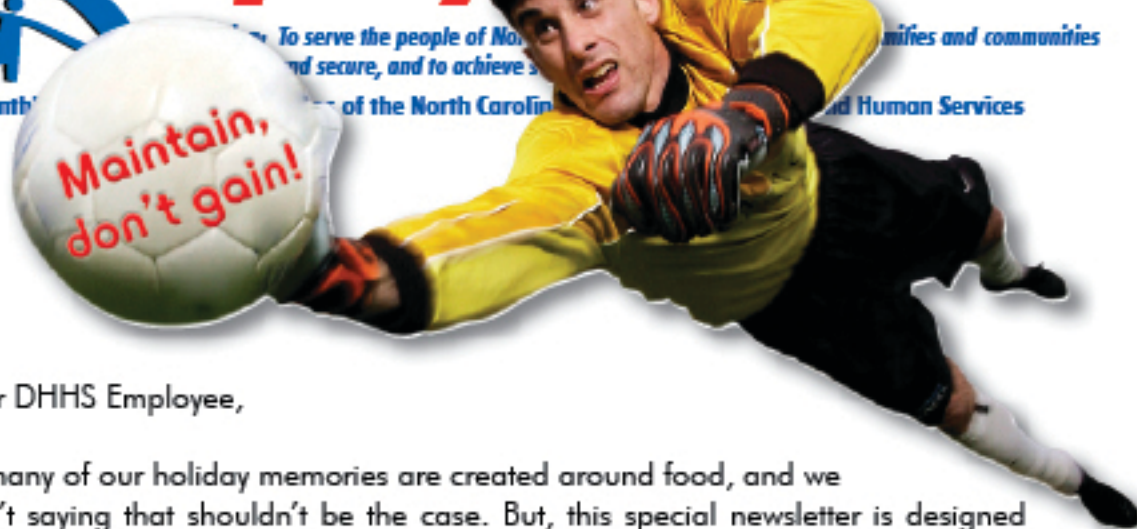




EmployeeUPDATE

To serve the people of North Carolina, to protect the health, safety, and secure, and to achieve... families and communities
A month... of the North Carolina... and Human Services



Dear DHHS Employee,

So many of our holiday memories are created around food, and we aren't saying that shouldn't be the case. But, this special newsletter is designed to get you thinking about holidays and food in a different light.

It gives you holiday tips to get more active and to eat healthier. This year's holiday memories can be made of more than just heavy casseroles and couch potato television sessions. I hope this information enriches you and your family's holiday experience.

It also includes information about a wonderful new program in the Division of Public Health – the Eat Smart, Move More holiday challenge. That program's slogan says it all – maintain don't gain this holiday season. I plan to participate in the challenge and I hope all of you will also consider taking the challenge. You can do so by going to www.MyEatSmartMoveMore.com.

Enjoy this holiday season the Eat Smart, Move More way.

Sincerely,

Carmen Hooker Odom

Special Edition November 2006: **Maintain, don't gain!**

INSIDE TOP FEATURES

Holiday Challenge Flyer, Page 2
This Holiday Season, Challenge Yourself to Maintain, Not Gain, Page 3
A Recipe for Holiday Cheer: Increasing Physical Activity the Easy Way, Page 4
State Health Director Signs Physical Activity and Healthy Eating Policy, Page 5
Top Ten Maintain, Don't Gain Strategies for the Holiday Season, Pages 10 & 11
Holiday Recipes, Pages 13-15
Changing Your Eating Habits One Day at a Time, Page 16





Registration is free, so sign up online now to take the challenge!

- ✓ Chat with your fellow Holiday Challengers across the state to get moral support every step of the way!
- ✓ Ask the experts your questions on our Holiday Challenge message board.
- ✓ Receive a free weekly newsletter chock full of tips, recipes, and more.
- ✓ Download tools to monitor your progress.

The Challenge: No weight gain during the holiday season!



November 13 through December 31

This Holiday Season, Challenge Yourself to Maintain, Not Gain

The holiday season is here! And while 'tis the season to be jolly, for many of us it is also a season of busy schedules, crowded stores, and yes – unhealthy eating habits. With a series of feasts and celebrations just around the corner, now is the time to challenge yourself to maintain your weight this holiday season.

The fact that many people tend to put on a few pounds during the holiday should come as no surprise. The big holiday feasts, the tempting sweets around the office and less free time to be active, all conspire to cause a shock when we finally step onto the scale in January. And while the amount of weight gained during the holidays varies from person to person, what is consistent is that holiday weight gained rarely is ever lost. This seasonal weight gain accumulates throughout the years and can be a major contributor to obesity later in life.

With this in mind, resist the temptation to indulge over the holidays because you promise yourself you'll make up for it in next year. As most of us know from experience, New Year's resolutions were made to be broken and it's harder than we think to burn off those holiday pounds. Start now and start the new year off on the right track, rather than in the hole and feeling pressured to dig yourself out.

The Eat Smart, Move More – Maintain, Don't Gain Holiday Challenge is for everyone. If you are at a healthy weight right now, challenge yourself to stay there. Each pound you don't gain is one you won't be struggling with come January.

If you are among the two-thirds of Americans who have a few pounds to lose, the Holiday Challenge is a great place to start. The holidays are stressful enough for most people without the pressure of trying to lose weight added on top of everything else. So focus on maintaining your weight by developing healthy behaviors. This way, even if the numbers on the scale don't move backwards, you'll have a happy holiday season and be well on your way to

continuing your lifestyle changes in the new year when life has settled back down!

If you've recently lost weight, use the Holiday Challenge as motivation to stay the course. Don't let the next month and a half of temptation derail all the progress you've made!

**Sign up for the challenge at
www.MyEatSmartMoveMore.com**

To help you successfully complete the challenge you will receive:

- A weekly newsletter with tips, ideas, recipes and more.
- The chance to win a Eat Smart, Move More gift bag each week
- Access to discussion boards to chat with others completing the challenge
- The opportunity to ask the experts your questions
- Downloadable tools to help you monitor your progress



A Recipe for Holiday Cheer: Increasing Physical Activity the Easy Way

By Lori Schneider, MA, CHES

Let's face it – life is hectic. It doesn't get any easier with shorter days, falling leaves, and holiday gatherings just around the corner. Trying to fit physical activity, or exercise, into most days can be a challenge, at best. But there are some choices we can make to add physical activity into our daily routine.

First, the recommendation: Do something active most days of the week, at a moderate intensity. What does that mean? Moving at a moderate intensity means you breathe heavier than normal and your heart beats faster. You should still be able to carry on a conversation while moving at a moderate intensity.

You may be thinking, “gosh, that happened last weekend as I vacuumed the floor getting the house ready for Aunt Mable's visit!” And you would be right. Any activity that makes you breathe heavier for at least 10 minutes at a time can be beneficial for your health. Raking leaves, mopping floors and other heavier household chores count. But so do more enjoyable activities, such as taking a walk outdoors to enjoy the crisp, fall weather.

If you just can't take a full 30 minutes each day to move more, try breaking it up into 10 minute pockets – for example, taking a ten minute walk during your lunch break, going to a store to shop instead of shopping online, taking the stairs instead of the elevator (several times each day),

walking into the gas station to pay for gas instead of paying at the pump, or parking farther away from the mall entrance and walking.

You may be thinking, “but my lunch hour is when I run all of my errands and if I shop on the internet, I don't have to fight the crowds or the traffic. My leaf blower is great and makes clearing the leaves so much easier. Paying at the pump is more convenient than walking in to pay, especially when it's cold outside.” While all of this may be true, each of us must determine for ourselves if the rewards are worth the investment in time. The choices we make today affect our health tomorrow. And aside from the long term benefits to health, including reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke, diabetes and cancer, regular physical activity also has been shown to reduce depression and anxiety, improve mood, and enhance ability to perform daily tasks throughout the life span.

And who doesn't need a little anxiety reduction to get through the holidays?

The bottom line is that making choices to move more everyday is important for good health. And more benefits can be gained from exercising at least three to five days a

week. For more information on moving more, visit **EatSmart-MoveMoreNC.com** and click on the consumer site for downloadable tips.



State Health Director Signs Physical Activity and Healthy Eating Policy

As part of the Department of Health and Human Services' Health Smart staff wellness initiative, Dr. Leah Devlin, state health director, led a large group of Division of Public Health employees on a walk for the inaugural Move More Monday at noon Monday, October 16th.

Devlin kicked off the event by signing the Division's landmark Physical Activity and Healthy Eating policy, which adopted North Carolina's five-year state plan, Eat Smart, Move More: North Carolina's Plan to Prevent Overweight, Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases, as the Division's official plan to stem the rising tide of obesity.

"The Division is a role model for every other state agency, non-profit and for-profit business in our state," said Devlin. "This new state plan will help all of us work toward our goal of a healthier North Carolina."

The policy Devlin signed proclaims that meetings will include physical activity breaks as well as healthy foods and beverages, and participation in Division worksite wellness activities and facilities on the main campus will be supported by Division management.

The Division also has a stairwell initiative, funded by and modeled after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's initiative, and walking maps available for employees to use to get physical activity at the various Division worksites.

Devlin initiated Move More Mondays as an ongoing effort to model healthy behaviors among Division employees. Move More Mondays will continue every Monday at noon at the Six Forks offices in Raleigh. Similar Move More events are being planned for other DPH worksites. For more information about Move More Mondays, contact Michael Sanderson, the Division's worksite wellness committee chair at 919-707-5620 or email him at Michael.sanderson@ncmail.net.

For more information about the Eat Smart, Move More State Plan or the Physical Activity and Healthy Eating policy, please visit **www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com**.



Physical Activity and Healthy Eating Policy

Whereas:

The North Carolina Division of Public Health is concerned about the health of its employees and North Carolinians;

Whereas:

The North Carolina Division of Public Health recognizes its role in modeling and promoting healthy work environments for the state;

Whereas:

North Carolinians are becoming more aware of the need to eat smart and move more to improve quality of life and reduce health care costs;

Therefore:

Effective Monday, October 16, 2006, it is the policy of the North Carolina Division of Public Health that activities and events sponsored or supported by this organization will include opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating by :

- Adopting the Eat Smart, Move More: NC's Plan to Prevent Overweight, Obesity and Chronic Diseases as the NC Division of Public Health's Plan;
- Building physical activity breaks into meetings whenever possible;
- Encouraging stairwell use, use of walking maps and worksite wellness facilities and activities;
- Management supporting and encouraging physical activity, healthy eating and worksite wellness committee activities;
- Providing healthier foods and beverages during meetings using the Eat Smart Healthy Meeting Guide as a resource.

Get a taste for eating smart and moving more

Nutrient-Rich Holiday Feasts from Soup to Nuts

Nutrient-rich foods are the best that nature has to offer – whole foods that deliver more nutrition than pills and supplements. With bright colors and delicious flavors, nutrient-rich foods are a gift on any holiday table. Calorie for calorie, they provide more of the nutrients you need to maintain your weight, enhance your health, and reduce your stress during this hectic time of year. Here are a dozen easy ways to add nutrient-rich foods to all your holiday feasts.

1. **SOUP:** Go for thick soups – like navy bean or roasted vegetable. For cream soups with less fat, use low-fat buttermilk.
2. **APPETIZERS:** Make it simple – broccoli trees and baby carrots with low-fat dip or refreshing sliced citrus fruit.
3. **SALAD:** So many festive options – like mixed greens with sliced pears, strawberries, dried cranberries and chopped walnuts.
4. **MEAT ENTREES:** For extra holiday flavor, rub a lean beef or pork roast with a mixture of your favorite herbs and spices.
5. **FISH ENTREES:** Salmon makes a super centerpiece for a feast – especially surrounded by snap peas and roasted red potatoes.
6. **POULTRY ENTREES:** Stuff all your holiday birds with whole grain breads or wild rice mixed with plenty of vegetables.
7. **VEGETABLES:** Add lots of nutrition value for little money with winter vegetables (beets, carrots, squash, pumpkin and yams).
8. **PASTA and RICE:** Whole grain pastas and brown rice mixtures add chewy textures, rich flavors and an extra serving of fiber.
9. **BREADS:** To pack a nutrition punch into your breadbasket, fill it with whole grains – rolls, breadsticks or crackers.
10. **DESSERTS:** Nutrient-rich desserts are easy – just start with a brightly colored fruit like cranberries, pineapple or oranges.
11. **FRUIT and CHEESE:** Or try a different finish to your feast with a flavorful cheese (like cheddar or Swiss) and crisp apple slices.
12. **NUTS:** As a snack or a healthy stocking stuffer, nuts are a popular treat. A handful is the perfect serving size!



National Nutrition Month® - March 2005

Adapted by the NC NET Program from Eat Right Montana materials

HOW TO COOK THE THANKSGIVING TURKEY: TO FRY OR NOT TO FRY

As you probably know by now, deep-frying has become a popular method for cooking a whole turkey – especially in the south. When done properly, deep-fried turkey can be a tasty treat. But it is important to keep in mind that deep-frying your turkey will add fat and calories. Also, deep-fried turkeys are often injected with a marinade, which can be high in sodium.

However, the difference in calories and fat isn't as big as you would think. Though the nutritional content varies by cooking style, here are some approximations: 3.5 ounces of deep fried turkey has approximately 190 calories and 11 grams of fat, while the same size portion of regular roasted turkey breast typically contains about 165 calories and 7 grams of fat. Remove the skin off your serving of roasted turkey breast and you are at around 140 calories and 3.5 grams of fat. However, removing the skin off the deep fried turkey won't make it equivalent to a serving of roasted turkey breast without skin. Turkey skin melts a bit into the meat below it during cooking, and this makes the meat fattier and with more calories than its roasted counterpart.

With this in mind, your best bet is to stick with a skinless serving of an oven roasted turkey breast. But if the fried turkey is calling your name, feel free to indulge as long as you make up for it when it comes down to the fatty side dishes and calorie-laden desserts. Also, when frying the turkey, be sure to keep the oil above 340 degrees – the high temperature will keep the turkey from absorbing much oil.



Eat Smart, Move More - Stay Healthy

Ten Ways to "Take 10" for Healthy Holidays

Holidays are stressful. Too much food, too much alcohol, too much shopping, too many parties, too many people and even too much fun. It can all add up to feeling exhausted, overwhelmed and completely stressed out. Fortunately, we can change our reactions to the pressures of the season and keep our brains and our bodies healthy. Here are ten easy ways to take 10 minutes to "de-stress" in the midst of the usual holiday commotion.

1. **Take a break:** 10 minutes is all it takes. A small break can make a big difference in your attitude. Regular relaxation can also help fight off colds and other infections.
2. **Take a walk:** Moving for 10 minutes can help you maintain a healthy weight and a healthy attitude. Take three 10-minute walks and your heart will get the benefits too!
3. **Take a nap:** A good night's sleep is essential for good health, especially when your days are beyond busy. A 10-minute daytime nap can also help boost energy levels.
4. **Take a bath:** With or without bubbles, running water is relaxing. A 10-minute bath (or shower) can sooth tired muscles and release holiday tensions.
5. **Take a call:** It does make a difference to "reach out and touch someone." Connect with a special friend or family member for 10 minutes by phone or in person.
6. **Take a dog break:** Fresh air is good for humans and animals. Take 10 minutes to throw a few balls and bring some sunshine into your life and the dog's life!
7. **Take a child break:** Children have the right attitude toward holidays - wonder and joy. Just 10 minutes with a child can help revive anyone's sagging spirits.
8. **Take a book break:** A good book can give you a healthy rest from the holiday hubbub. Put all your lists aside for 10 minutes and curl up with a book and a cup of tea.
9. **Take a snack break:** Stress often leads to overeating. Sit down for 10 minutes and eat a nutrient-rich snack, like fruit and cheese, half a sandwich or a handful of nuts.
10. **Take a music break:** Holiday songs, carols and hymns are a lovely way to take a break, to relax or even to dance. Try a 10-minute sing-a-long as a stress reliever.



National Nutrition Month® - March 2004
Adapted by the NC NET Program from Eat Right Montana materials

Top 10 Maintain, Don't Gain Strategies for the Holiday Season

By Bithiah Lafontant, MPH
N.C. Division of Public Health

With so many opportunities to celebrate during the holiday season – along with busy schedules that often lead to less time spent being active – it's no wonder that the average American is likely to find themselves a few pounds heavier come January. And despite all the good intentions behind the health focused New Year's resolutions, these extra pounds are rarely ever lost. They stick around all year until the next holiday season...when the cycle starts all over again.

But it doesn't have to be that this year! Break the cycle by balancing what you eat with your level of activity and start the new year off right.

Here are some tips to help you navigate through this holiday season:



- 1. Be realistic.** Studies have shown that people who said they were trying to lose weight over the holidays gained about the same amount as everyone else. So instead of stressing yourself with the idea of dieting this holiday season, focus instead on maintaining your weight.

- 2. Don't feel guilty about what you eat.** The holidays are not the time to deny yourself your favorites. Enjoy the treats that you only get during the holidays and try to pass on the unhealthy items that are around year-round.

- 3. But do watch what you eat.** The holidays are not a free pass to eat whatever you want. Moderation is the key to healthy eating during this season and any other time of the year. Don't treat holiday meals as all-you-can-eat buffets. Serve yourself a plate and leave room for a sensible portion of your favorite dessert. And keep an eye on your snacking throughout the day or at parties – those extra calories can add up quickly.



- 4. Schedule your days.** Let's face it – the holidays are hectic. And between the kids' school plays, family gatherings, and a plethora of holiday parties to attend, it is easy to get overbooked and overstressed. Combat stress by getting organized and scheduling your time – don't forget to include in time to go to the gym, relax or anything else you do to care for yourself!



- 5. Stay active.** Being active is your best weapon in the battle against stress and holiday weight gain. Not only will being active allow you the flexibility to enjoy your favorite holiday treats, but it will also give you more energy to meet all the competing demands on your time. If you already are regularly active, keep it up during the holidays. If you aren't active, work on developing this great habit by incorporate physical activity into your celebrations. Try games like musical chairs (to holiday tunes, of course), charades, or touch football.

- 6. Don't starve yourself before a holiday celebration.** It's tempting to show up at holiday parties with an empty stomach in order to save room for all the goodies. But this will likely lead to overeating and overindulging in holiday treats. A better idea is to eat small snack before you go. This will allow you to sample your favorites without making a whole meal out of pumpkin pie.

- 7. Send the leftovers home with guests.** When you host a holiday gathering, do yourself a favor and send home most of the leftovers with guests. The less tempting treats lying around the house, the less likely you are to mindlessly snack or give in to late night temptations.



- 8. Ensure there are healthy food choices.** When hosting a celebration or bringing a dish to a gathering you are attending, you can make sure there are healthy choices. You may be surprised to find how many others appreciate a healthy alternative on the table to complement the traditional treats.



- 9. Limit the alcohol.** It easy to think about calories in the foods you eat, but don't forget to think about your drink choices as well. Not only does alcohol have calories (some drinks, eggnog for example, have LOTS of calories) but it also lowers your inhibitions, so you may be more likely to overeat. Try to drink water between your alcohol drinks and limit the amount you choose to consume.

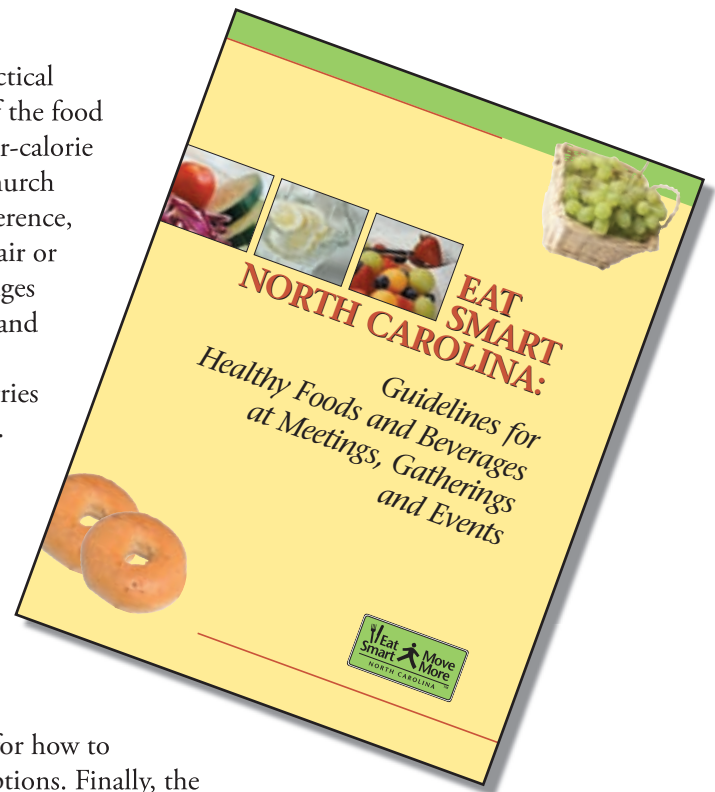
- 10. Have fun!** Your weight should never become the focus of the holidays. While it's important to adopt healthy behaviors, it's just as important to your well-being that you enjoy the company of your loved ones and celebrate the togetherness of the holiday season.

Eat Smart Healthy Meeting Guide Now Available

The Physical Activity and Nutrition Branch of the NC Division of Public Health is proud to announce a new resource: Eat Smart North Carolina: Guidelines for Healthy Foods and Beverages at Meetings, Gatherings and Events.

This colorful, planning tool provides practical guidelines for anyone who is in charge of the food served at events to choose lower fat, lower-calorie foods and drinks. Whether planning a church supper, business meeting, statewide conference, sorority function, neighborhood health fair or any other gathering, making simple changes to the foods and drinks offered at group and community events gives attendees the energy boost they may need without worries about too many calories or unhealthy fat.

The Eat Smart Healthy Meeting Guide provides healthy food and beverage suggestions for various event meals and snacks, as well as practical tips for stocking vending machines and the calories and fat in popular food and beverage items. Additionally, the guide provides sample menus and suggestions for how to replace typical offerings with healthier options. Finally, the guide also provides a sample Eat Smart North Carolina Healthy Foods Policy that can be adapted and implemented by any organization, agency or community group where foods and beverages are served.



Visit **www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com** to download a PDF of the Eat Smart Healthy Meeting Guide.

Holiday Recipes

Eating healthy during the holiday season doesn't mean you have to deny yourself tasty treats or pass on your favorites. By making a few simple changes to the recipes of traditional holiday treats or trying a healthy recipe for the first time, you can enjoy the delicious foods of the holiday guilt-free!

Here a few healthy options for traditional favorites that you may enjoy over the holiday. Sign up for the Eat Smart, Move More – Maintain, Don't Gain Challenge for recipes to try throughout the holiday season.

Whipped Sweet Potatoes with Apples

(Adapted from the American Institute for Cancer Research)

This year, why not try an alternative to the traditional sweet potato casserole with marshmallow creme? This recipe allows you to not only cut out some of the sugar found in the traditional casserole, but also provides a way to add more fruit to your holiday table.

Ingredients:

3 ½ pounds sweet potatoes,
about 6 medium ones
1 Tbsp. canola oil
2 Tbsp. pure, dark maple syrup, or to taste
Salt and freshly ground pepper
2 tsp. unsalted butter or margarine
1 Golden Delicious apple
Nonstick cooking spray
Nutmeg for garnish

Instructions:

Peel and cut the sweet potatoes into 2-inch cubes.

Steam them in a steamer basket, in the microwave, or in a pot with ¼ cup of water, cover and steam for 10-15 minutes or until the cubes are tender.

Place the sweet potatoes in a large bowl.

Add the canola oil and maple syrup to the hot sweet potatoes and mash until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spray a 9-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Spread the sweet potatoes into the prepared dish, making an even layer.

Peel, halve and core the apple. Place each half, cut-side down, on a cutting board and cut it crosswise into thin slices. Arrange the slices in overlapping rows to cover the sweet potatoes. Melt the 2 teaspoons of butter in the microwave and then brush the apples lightly with the melted butter.

Bake uncovered until the sweet potatoes are heated through and the apple slices have softened, about 25 to 30 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature with nutmeg sprinkled on top.

Nutritional Information:

Makes 12 - 1/2 cup servings.

Per serving:

110 calories
2 grams total fat (<1 g. saturated fat)
22 grams carbohydrates
1 gram protein
3 gram dietary fiber
28 mg. sodium.

Pumpkin Soup

(Adapted from the American Institute for Cancer Research)

Pumpkin is full of nutrients and is a great addition to your holiday table. For the sake of convenience, this recipe calls for canned pumpkin. However, if it is available, fresh pumpkin can also be used.

Ingredients:

2 tsp. olive oil
½ cup chopped onion
2 celery stalks, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp. peeled, minced fresh ginger
2 tsp. sugar
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
Pinch of cinnamon
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 can (14.5 oz.) pumpkin
1 potato, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
4 cups vegetable or fat-free,
reduced sodium chicken broth
¼ cup nonfat sour cream
2 green onions, chopped

Instructions:

In large stock pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, garlic, ginger and sugar and cook 4 minutes, until tender.

Add nutmeg and cinnamon. Season with salt and pepper to taste, and stir to coat. Add pumpkin, potato and broth. Bring to a boil.

Reduce heat to medium-low, partially cover and simmer 20 minutes, until pumpkin and potato are tender.

Ladle soup into bowls and top each serving with sour cream and green onions.

Nutritional Information:

Makes 6 servings.

Per serving:

89 calories
2 grams total fat (<1 g saturated fat)
16 grams carbohydrates
4 grams protein
2 grams dietary fiber
409 mg sodium

Healthy Green Bean Casserole

Try this low calories version of a Southern favorite!

Ingredients:

1 can (10¾ ounces) reduced-fat cream
of mushroom soup
½ cup fat-free sour cream
¼ cup fat-free milk
1¼ pounds green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces,
cooked until crisp-tender
½ cup canned French-fried onions

Instructions:

Mix soup, sour cream, and milk in 2-quart casserole; stir in beans.

Bake, uncovered, at 350-degrees until mixture is bubbly, about 45 minutes.

Sprinkle onions on top during last five minutes of baking time.

Nutritional Information:

Makes 6 servings.

Per serving:

81 calories
2.9 grams fat
11.6 grams carbohydrates
3 grams protein
172 mg sodium

Apple Crisp

(Adapted from the American Institute for Cancer Research)

Apple pie, the classic American dessert, is loaded with fat and calories, much of which is found in the pie crust. This holiday season try a crust-less alternative: the apple crisp.

Ingredients:

Canola oil cooking spray
4 Granny Smith apples, cored and cut into thin slices or bite-size pieces
½ cup raisins
3 Tbsp. 100% apple juice
¼ cup whole wheat flour
¼ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
¼ cup brown sugar
¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
¾ tsp. ground nutmeg
¾ Tbsp. cold butter, cut into small pieces

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Coat 8-inch square baking dish with cooking spray.

Combine apples, raisins and apple juice in bowl, toss well and set aside. In another bowl, combine flour, rolled oats, brown sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. With pastry blender or knife and fork, cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse meal.

Transfer apple mixture to baking dish. Sprinkle flour mixture evenly over surface. Lightly coat top with cooking spray.

Cover and bake 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for 20 more minutes or until apples are tender. Remove from oven and let stand on wire rack at least 20 minutes. Cut into squares and serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutritional Information:

Makes 6 servings.

Per serving:

96 calories
2 grams fat (1 g. saturated fat)
46 grams carbohydrate
2 grams protein
4 grams dietary fiber
20 mg. sodium

Light Pumpkin Pie

This lighter version of traditional pumpkin pie saves you much of the calories and fat of the traditional version and tastes the same!

Ingredients:

1 cup ginger snap cookies
½ cup egg whites (about 4)
16 oz can pumpkin
½ cup sugar
2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
(cinnamon, ginger, cloves)
12 oz can evaporated skim milk

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Grind the cookies in a good processor. Lightly spray a 9" glass pie pan with vegetable cooking spray. Pat the cookie crumbs into the pan evenly.

Mix the rest of the ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Pour into the crust and bake until knife inserted in center comes out clean, about 45 minutes.

Store in the refrigerator. Allow to cool and slice in 8 wedges.

Nutritional Information:

Makes 8 servings.

Per slice:

165 calories
1.5 grams fat (0.5g saturated fat)
12 grams carbohydrate
6 grams protein
2 grams fiber
170 mg sodium

Changing Your Eating Habits One Day At A Time

By Debbie Crane

I'm not sure when it happened exactly. It could have been the day I went in for my annual checkup and was told that my Body Mass Index (BMI) was approaching 25, which is the point that I would "officially" be considered overweight. Or, it could have been the next weekend, when I bent over and split my favorite pair of blue jeans – blue jeans that were three sizes larger than what I had worn in my late twenties.

At any rate, I decided I needed to take action. I already knew that my diet wasn't particularly healthy; when you eat potatoes three times a day and the only green matter on your plate is a sprig of parsley for show, that's a pretty good sign.

So, two and a half years ago, I decided it was time for a change. There was a level of vanity involved; I wanted to look good in my clothes. But, honestly, I was more concerned about my health. I didn't feel good; my energy was down and my old perkiness was waning.

I cut out fried foods. Those three-time-a-day potatoes were a thing of the past. I concentrated on injecting as many fruits and vegetables and as much fiber as possible into my diet. Gradually, my clothes got looser. It wasn't fast; I didn't do one of those miracle diets that have you stuffing yourself with bacon and butter with nothing to spread the butter on or put the bacon between. Instead, I focused on eating the right stuff. If I was going to eat bread, then it would be whole grain. If I was going to eat beef, then it was going to be low fat. And, I started reading the labels on food – partially hydrogenated vegetable oil became my arch enemy.

After a year, I had lost 25 pounds. And, I've kept it off. I feel better. I wear several sizes smaller, which gave me a great excuse for buying new clothes (okay, I know I have a shallow side, but what the heck).

The point is that small changes can make a difference. That's particularly important during the holidays. I never met a casserole that I didn't like. And, when it came to pecan pies—the bigger the slice the better. I've learned that a small piece of pecan pie is a real treat when you don't normally eat any. And, those casseroles? Well, when you quit eating lots of



fat, and you sample your old ways, you find out that fat just doesn't taste as good as it used to.

And, instead of, spending the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays holed up on the couch in front of the TV, I'm going to be out with my dogs playing fetch.

And, I am taking the Eat Smart, Move More – Maintain, Don't Gain Challenge. That's going to be my added insurance against the big holiday weight gain. I can't tell you how many times, I ate myself bleary and weary through the holiday season – saying "Oh, I'll lose those pounds in January." They didn't come off, and instead I wound up with a questionable BMI and split blue jeans.